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DPR Mission

The Mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration, and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

Land Ownership

When the Project 2100 lands were purchased by the State the "recreational interest" for the lands deemed suitable for recreation use was transferred to DPR, although the State of California remained the fee title holder. DPR cannot sell this land, nor can it do anything with it that interferes with project purposes (i.e., DWR's ability to provide water and power), but otherwise it controls these lands and manages them for recreation and the protection and enhancement of natural and cultural resources. (The transfer did not include the Afterbay, nor the old railroad grade along the south side of the Diversion Pool and a few other--generally inaccessible--areas. The Bureau of Land Management also retains title to some of the land surrounding the Lake.)

Mandates

The controlling statutes for the State Water Project (SWP) reservoirs are found in the State Water Code (SWC), Sections 11900-11925 (also known as the Davis-Dolwig Act).

- **SWC 11910**:** DWR has responsibility for planning for public recreation on SWP reservoirs, in consultation with DPR.
- **SWC 11918:** DPR is responsible for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of public recreation facilities and the management of project lands and water surfaces for recreational use. The Department of Boating and Waterways (DBAW) is responsible for the design and construction of boating facilities.
- **SWC 11918:** also gives DPR the authority to "establish and enforce" standards for the development, operation, and maintenance of the public recreation areas.
- **SWC 11919:** states that public recreation facilities in connection with state water projects are recreation areas.

The controlling statutes for general DPR planning and operations are contained in the Public Resources Code (PRC), Division I, Chapters I-10, Sections 500-546 and 5000-5843. The sections of primary interest for Project 2100 are those which control the types of development.

- **PRC 5019.50****: requires that units of the State Park System be classified into one of a number of specified categories; these categories determine the extent and types of development allowable. Lake Oroville is a State Recreation Area.
- **PRC 5019.53**: states that "Improvements undertaken within state parks shall be for the purpose of making the areas available for public enjoyment and education in a manner consistent with the preservation of natural, scenic, cultural, and ecological values for present and future generations. Improvements which do not directly affect the public's enjoyment of [these values], which are attractions in themselves, or which are otherwise available to the public within a reasonable distance outside the park, shall not be undertaken in state parks."
- **PRC 5019.56**: addresses development in SRAs. "Improvements may be undertaken to provide for recreational activities, including but not limited to , camping, picknicking, swimming, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, boating, waterskiing, diving, winter sports, fishing, and hunting."
- **PRC 5019.56**: also states that "Improvements to provide for urban or in door formalized recreational activities shall not be undertaken within state recreation areas."
- **PRC 5080.03**: Concessions may be established for the "...enhancement of recreational and educational experiences at units of the state park system," but "...shall not be entered into solely for their revenue producing potential."
- **PRC 5080.30**: allows for operation of State Park lands by other public agencies under lease or operating agreements. The law requires that these entities operate them in accordance with State Park standards and legal mandates, however, so all the above provisions would still apply.

Planning History

- **PRC 5002.2** requires preparation of a General Plan before development of any new facilities within a unit of the State Park System, with some exceptions (trails, for example, are exempt, as are provisions for public health and safety).
- General Plans and Amendments must be approved by the State Park and Recreation Commission (SPRC).
- **A General Plan was prepared for Lake Oroville in 1973, and a General Plan Amendment (to address development at Lime Saddle) was completed in 1988.** Theoretically, any Recreation Plan prepared by DWR for the unit could be adopted by the SPRC as a new General Plan for Lake Oroville. If proposed new facilities were compatible with the old General Plan, this should not be necessary.

****The full text of these and other California Code sections may be found on the Internet at the Legislative Counsel's website: <http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/>**



- In 1864, Abraham Lincoln signed an act of Congress which gave the Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias to the State of California to be the first park in the nation. The first State Park Ranger, Galen Clark, was appointed as caretaker at Yosemite.
- In 1890, Congress created a national park surrounding these State lands and in 1905, the California Legislature returned these lands to the Federal government as an addition to Yosemite National Park.
- Meanwhile, interest was growing in preservation of the coastal redwoods in the Santa Cruz Mountains. In 1902, through the efforts of the Sempervirens Club, an area of old growth redwoods was set aside as California Redwoods State Park. It is now known as Big Basin Redwoods State Park. In 1902, a commission was appointed by the governor to administer the park.
- Interest had also been growing in preserving the state's historic sites, and through the influence of such groups as the Native Sons of the Golden West, the gold discovery site at Coloma, Sutter's Fort, and the Russian fur trading post at Fort Ross had been preserved from obliteration.
- The Save-the-Redwoods League was formed in 1918 to preserve these trees along the north coast. Under their leadership, the California State Parks Council was formed with representation from numerous state organizations. The Council started a campaign which resulted in the creation of the State Park Commission and provision of a survey of park needs.
- In 1927, a Division of Parks was established within the Department of Natural Resources, and acquisition of park lands began, with bond funding and gifts from communities, individuals, and organizations.
- By 1940, the State Park System consisted of over 70 parks, beaches, and historical monuments totally over 300,000 acres, purchased at a cost of \$15 million.
- Beginning in 1933, major facilities were constructed through the Civilian Conservation Corps and other Federal Aid programs, supplementing developments begun by the state.

Today the California State Park System has 265 units

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| 1.3 million acres of land | 2,700 employees |
| 280 miles of coastline | 630 miles of lake and river frontage |
| 1500 historic structures | 55 million visitors per year |
| 3000 miles of trails | 18,000 campsites & 11,000 picnic sites |